

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMCONSUL STUTTGART

TO AMEMBASSY BONN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, GW

SUBJ: BRANDT RESIGNATION AS SEEN BY BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG'S ALL
CDU CABINET

1 SUMMARY: IN CABINET MEETING MAY 7 AND EXTENDED
PRIVATE DINNER SESSION AFTERWARDS, MINPRES FILBINGER AND
HIS CDU COLLEAGUES FOCUSSED ON ESTIMATED IMPACT OF
BRANDT RESIGNATION ON BOTH SPD AND CDU CHANCES IN THIS
YEAR'S LANDTAG ELECTIONS IN LOWER SAXONY AND HESSE.
THEY CONCLUDED THAT IMPACT DEPENDS UPON DEGREE OF SWING IN
PUBLIC SENTIMENT AROUSED BY BRANDT'S " ENSHRINEMENT" AS
INDIVIDUAL DESERVING OF EXTRAORDINARY SYMPATHY. END
SUMMARY

2. AS BUNDESRAT PRESIDENT THIS YEAR, FILBINGER HAS BEEN
IMPRESSED BY UTILITY OF USING THAT FORM TO ADVANCE CDU
POLICIES. HIS B/W COLLEAGUES, AS CHAIRMEN OR SPOKESMEN
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IN VARIOUS BUNDESRAT COMMITTEES, ALSO SEE SIGNIFICANCE

OF PARTY VOTING MARGINS IN PUTTING THROUGH OR
REVISING LEGISLATION. DISARRAY IN SPD/FDP COALITION
POSITIONS SINCE NOV 72 AND LESSONS LEARNED AS OPPOSITION
PARTY HAVE PROVIDED CDU GREATER THAN EXPECTED OPPORTUNITY
TO USE BUNDESRAT. KEY COMMITTEE IS VERMITTLUNGSAUSSCHUSS
WHERE CURRENT 8-12 ADVANTAGE TO SPD/FSP WOULD BE BALANCED
OUT AT 10-10 IF CDU WINS IN LOWER SAXONY.

3. PRIOR TO MAY 6 FILBINGER AND CO. WERE INCREASINGLY
OPTIMISTIC AS RECENT ELECTIONS SHOWED TREND TOWARD
CDU, ALBEIT MORE AS DISSATISFACTION WITH SPD THAN SURGE
OF CDU SUPPORT. NOW, THEY NOT SO SURE. OPTIMISTS
AMONG THEM STILL BELIEVE CDU WILL GET 50 PERCENT IN LOWER
SAXONY BECAUSE OF WHAT THEY CALL "EXTRAORDINARY ROLE OF
SECURITY FACTORS" IN VOTER'S CONSIDERATION. THUS GUILLAUME
AFFAIR COULD BE PLUS FOR CDU. PESSIMISTS SAY THAT
PUBLIC SYMPATHY FOR BRANDT WILL GIVE SPD BADLY NEEDED
BOOST, THAT JUSOS WILL NOW BEHAVE BETTER, AND ALL THIS
WILL KEEP CDU VOTE TO 48 PERCENT.

4. LOOKING AHEAD FOR NEAR TERM, CONSERVATIVE B/W
CABINET NOW GIVES HELMUT SCHMIDT CABINET A SHORT LIFE
EXPECTANCY OF 6-8 MONTHS. THE COMPLEXITY AND MAGNITUDE
OF PROBLEMS TO BE RESOLVED AND THE NEED TO DO THIS
WITHOUT APPEARING TO BREAK WITH BRANDT AND WEHNER
BUT STILL TO PROJECT A FRESH IMAGE-- ALL THIS TOGETHER
LOOKS NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE.

5. LOGICAL CONCLUSION (ASSUMING THAT ESTIMATE PROVES
CORRECT) WOULD BE THAT CDU SHOULD GET READY FOR MORE
CRISES AND NEW ELECTIONS BUT WE HAVE NO FIRM EVIDENCE
B/W CDU LEADERS HAVE IN FACT THOUGHT THAT FAR YET.
ON CONTRARY, INITIAL FILBINGER REACTION TO BRANDT
RESIGNATION WAS TO DOWN-PLAY NEW ELECTION THEME IN
LINE WITH NATIONAL CDU PRONOUNCEMENTS.

5 LOOKING FARTHER AHEAD TO LONGER RANGE, (1976 AND
BEYOND) B/W CABINET REMAINS CONVINCED THAT FDP ACTIONS
WILL BE DECISIVE. WHEN FDP SEES THAT IT IS INCREASINGLY
MERE APPENDAGE TO LAME DUCK SPD, THE FDP WILL BE OPEN
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TO COALITION WITH CDU AND NEW POWER CONSTELLATION
WILL OCCUR NATURALLY. CDU HERE CAREFULLY LEAVING DOOR
AJAR FOR THIS EVENT WHICH, NOW MORE THAN EVER, SEEMS
INEVITABLE TO IT. RUCHTI

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